



SELF PROGRAM 2021/2022

Arts and Politics

Anna Tomczak

Course information

Number of credits: 6 credits

Contact hours: 30 hours

Hours taught per week: 3 hours

Teaching period: fall 2021

Course description:

During this class we will revisit the most important art movements of 20th and 21st century (Dadaism and early avant-gardes, Situationists, conceptual art, land art and contemporary art) in the theoretical context of post-colonialism, feminism, anti-war movement, environmentalism, gay rights and anti-globalization. Students will work with different resources: critical texts, curatorial essays, press articles, artists statements, movies, videos and artworks reproductions in order to understand the role of the creative act: the artist by exhibiting his artwork takes a stand in a public debate.

Prerequisites:

Basic knowledge of the Western culture and history of art.

Course outline:

1. Art and politics: important notions (art, modern and contemporary art, politics, activism, *republic* and making things public). Case study: exhibition *Making Things Public*, curator/ Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, ZKM Germany

Obligatory reading: Latour B., *From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public*, exhibition catalogue, 2005, p. 5-30.

2. Early avant-gardes: Dadaism, futurism. Rebellion in art.

Obligatory reading: Marinetti F. T., *The Futurist Manifesto*, 1909

Additional reading: Bieber A. *I Revolt, Therefore I am*, in: Jansen G., Klanten R., Hübner M., Bieber

A., Alonzo P. (Ed.), *Art & Agenda. Political Art and Activism*, Gestalten, Berlin 2011.

3. Beginnings of pop art in England and *Nouveau réalisme* (new realism) in France.

Obligatory reading: Hamilton R., "For the Finest Art, Try Pop," *Gazette*, no. 1 (1961): 42-3. Rastany P., *The New Realistes*, 1960, manifest

Additional reading : Barthes R., *Mythologies : The Romans in Films*, p. 26-29, *Myth is depoliticized, Speech*, p. 145, *Myth on Left*, p. 149, The Noonday Press, 1991

4. Conceptual art (performance, happening, land art). Case study: *When attitudes becomes Form*, exhibition curated by Harald Szeeman, Kunsthalle Bern 1969 and its reenactment during Venice Biennial 2009.

Obligatory reading: *Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Becomes Form*, the catalogue of the exhibition in Kusthalle Bern, 1963

5. Feminism and art: Barbara Kruger, Judy Chicago, The Guerilla Girls.

Obligatory reading: Lippard L., *Six Years: The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, New York, 1973: *Escape attempts*, p. vii-xxii

6. Post-colonial studies. *All the World's Futures* exhibition in Venice by Okwui Enwezor

Obligatory reading: Said E.W. *Orientalism*, New York, 1979: *Introduction*

Additional reading: Hamadi L., Edward Said: *The postcolonial theory and the literature of decolonization* in: *European Scientific Journal* June 2014 /SPECIAL/ edition vol.2

7. Carnavalesque as the protest sensibility

Obligatory reading: Tancons C., *Occupy Wall Street: Carnival Against Capital? Carnavalesque as Protest Sensibility*, e-flux journal, 2011

Additional reading: Eco U., *From the Amusement to the Carnival*, in: *Turning Back the Clock: Hot Wars and Media Populism*, New York, 2007.

8. Think global act local : political art in countries and regimes.

Obligatory reading: Wochenklausur, *From the Object to the Concrete Intervention*, in: *Art Agenda. Political Art and Activism*, ed. Jansens G. and Klansten R., p. 62-66

9. Globalization and Contemporary Art.

Obligatory reading: online exhibition catalogue *The Global Contemporary Art Worlds After 1989*, ZKM Museum, 2011

10. Final writing exam.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this class the students will have knowledge of selected art movements in the 20th century and their social context. Students will improve their critical approach to the contemporary art as well as the role of an artist and art in the contemporary society. They will learn about some of the most important European artistic events and their impact (Manifesta, Documenta).

Assessment:

- students will work in groups of four in order to prepare a presentation about a selected artist or an artwork in reference to the topic discussed during the class. First presentation during the third week (30 %)
- obligatory reading and participation in class (10%)
- Final exam – three open questions related to the examples analysed in the class. (60%)

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) unexcused absences will be allowed; otherwise no mark will be given. An unexcused absence at a test (final test or continuous assessment) means no credits for the course.

Bibliography:

Alonzo P., *Anger is an Energy*, in: Jansen G., Klanten R., Hübner M., Bieber A., Alonzo P. (Ed.), *Art & Agenda. Political Art and Activism*, Gestalten, Berlin 2011.

Debord G., *The society of the spectacle*, Rebel Press, 2004;

Latour B., *From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public*, exhibition catalogue, 2005 | Karlsruhe, Germany;

Lacy, S., & Labowitz, L, (2003). *Feminist media strategies for political performance*. In: Jones, A. (Ed.), *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*(302-313). New York, NY: Routledge

Lippard L., *Six Years: the dematerialization of the art object*, New York and London, 1973

Tancons Claire, *Occupy Wall Street: Carnival Against Capital? Carnavalesque as Protest Sensibility*, e-flux Journal, December 2011.